Home Life on Early Ranches of Southwest Texas

CHAPTER XXXI

Lucius Hicks
Bandera County

By MYRTLE MURRAY
Home Industries Specialist,
Extension Service,
College Station Texas

BANDERA county with its wooded hills, abundant supply of water in the clear running streams, and grass was exactly what Lucius Hicks had always wanted. A country with a future. A chance for himself and an opportunity to grow up with the country had been his dream as a lad in North Carolina. And as he worked as a foreman on a big slave plantation in Mississippi, he dreamed of the time when he would own land and cattle—not cotton-picking slaves.

Caravans of ox-drawn wagons were continuously passing the plantation, on which he worked for three years in Mississippi, bound for Texas. Lured by the stories about the new and pioneer State, Lucius Hicks, too, joined the long trail of homeseekers. Reaching San Antonio he joined Captain James Callahan, an experienced Indian fighter, who was organizing an expedition to go into Mexico. This was for the purpose of chastising the Indians who were committing depredations upon the Texas settlers, then retreating into Mexico. After engaging in a few fights on the Rio Grande, and across from Piedras Negras, he came on to Bandera and began immediately to look for a location.

Four years before Lucius Hicks arrived at Bandera a colony of several families left Poland and came to Texas. Conditions in Poland were bad. There was so much more freedom in early Texas than the old country that these sturdy immigrants did not seem to mind the hardships of pioneer life. They had always worked. But now they had a chance to choose their work and to have homes of their own.

Among these was Hadvega Anderwald, a beautiful girl nearly 17 years old. She was thirteen years old when she landed at Indianola with her family. There she contracted the terrible fever which cost the lives of so many of the immigrants. During her suffering her hair all came out. Finally she was able to travel, and they went to Castroville, then to Panna Maria in Karnes county, the first Polish settlement in Texas. But they did not like it there, and came on to Bandera. They were not a farming group. They were craftsmen, mill workers, carpenters. The girls and women were skilled in the art of housekeeping.

Hadvega was working for "Grandma" Hays when she met Lucius Hicks. It did not take them long to make their decision. And on May 1, 1856, they were quietly married by the Justice of the Peace, and immediately went to live on a ranch on the Pedernales.

Beautiful Hadvega had forever severed the ties of Poland. She was the wife of a Texas ranchman from the time she solemnly made her vows. She knew she had made the first step in establishing a home and becoming a citizen of the new world.

They lived on the Pedernales a few months, then they moved to Bandera county on what was later known as "Hicks' Creek." Mr Hicks helped survey the land in sections. He took up 640 acres by "pre-emption," and wanted to buy another nearby section. But when Joe Miller wanted that section, Mr. Hicks let him have it as he wanted a neighbor more than he wanted that piece of land.

Lucius Hicks' first job was to build a log house near a spring in order to have plenty of water.

Mrs. Hicks thought the one room cabin with the shed room was perfect. Cooking over the open fireplace in big skillets and iron pots was no hardship to her. She was in a new country where she had an opportunity to earn something for her labor. She had a home of her own and she had one neighbor. Although she had never lived in such isolation, she was seldom lonely. She had been reared in a large family and they had lived in small communities in Poland. But she was busy with her housework, doing the washing, ironing, working in the garden, milking cows and taking care of the milk. The water for the house and for washing had to be carried from the nearby spring.

Mrs. Hicks' people tried to persuade her to move back to Bandera because she had to stay alone so much. But she preferred to stay on the ranch where she could take care of things.

Meantime, Lucius Hicks was happy doing the things he had always wanted to do. He cleared the land and planted a feed crop, and started acquiring cattle. His main cash income during the early years was from the sale of shingles. He made them himself out of cypress, using a cross-cut saw, froe, a shingle horse and drawing knife.

The shingles were sold in San Antonio. Mr. Hicks would take a load of shingles to market, and return with a load of supplies for himself or for some of the neighbors. The trip was made in an ox-drawn wagon and could usually be made in one week, if the weather was good.

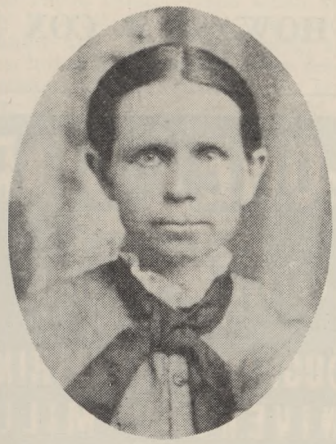
During these long lonely trips Lucius Hicks had time to think. And as he sat under the stars near his camp wagon he was busily planning for himself or for the community. He would increase his cattle, enlarge his flock of sheep and goats, and some day he would get some fine blooded horses. But, he loved land best of all. If he could just get a small start his livestock would grow. But the land had to be bought and paid for, except that which could be taken up by the children.

All six of the Hicks children were born in the log house. Mrs. Hicks stayed there alone with her small children weeks at a time when her husband went to San Antonio to sell shingles or was away fighting the Indians. She always kept an ax for protection.

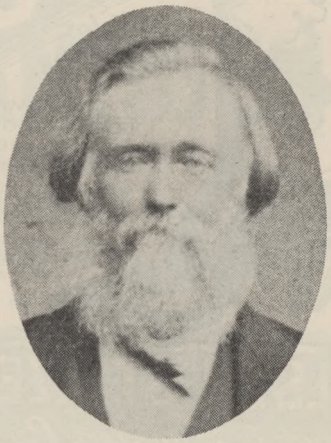
One time Mr. Hicks and a group of men pursued a band of Indians to the head of the Medina River. While the party halted Mr. Hicks went down into the bed of the creek. He found fresh tracks of the Indians. He knew they were still near for the water was muddy where they had just watered their horses. Going down the creek a little further he lost the Indian trail because they had turned into the rocks. Returning to where the Indians had watered their horses he discovered an Indian sitting on a bluff not more than thirty yards away, looking and listening. Mr. Hicks aimed his gun and fired quickly but steadily. The Indian let out a wild yell and went tearing down the ravine on his horse. Soon he began making a noise like a buzzard which was evidently a warning to his companions of the presence of the white men.

Mr. Hicks quickly reloaded his gun and went back to where he had left his horse and the other men. They all went to look for the wounded Indian and the others. They found the blood of the wounded Indian on the trail where the Indian ran his horse after Mr. Hicks had shot him. He had joined his companions further down the ravine. And the trail continued toward the Divide in a very rough country.

Mr. Hicks wanted to follow them, but the other men refused to go because the Indians knew of their presence and would be sure to ambush them. On the way back they met a squad of soldiers from



MRS. HADVEGA ANDERWALD HICKS



F. L. (LUCIUS) HICKS

The old rock house of the F. L. Hicks' family, built in 1871. It is still occupied by the youngest Hicks' daughter (Hercelia) and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Meadows. The right picture was taken in 1924 or 1925 at a family reunion on Mrs. Hicks' birthday. Seated is Mrs. F. L. Hicks. Standing left to right are six of the children of Mr. and Mrs. Hicks: Fabian, Gelmma, Mrs. R. D. Garrison (nee Animate Hicks), Mrs. Walter Meadows (nee Hercelia Hicks), Elvius and F. L. Hicks, Jr.

Camp Verde on the trail of the Indians. They went on together and found the Indian dead on the trail after they passed the place where the Indian was shot by Mr. Hicks.

During the war Mr. Hicks was a Texas Ranger and was assigned to home duty to protect the women and children. He had to be away from home most of the time. When he told his wife and children "goodbye" he knew it was likely they might be attacked by the Indians before he returned.

Mrs. Hicks knew he was continuously in danger. Her people wanted her to move to town or to get some one to stay with her. But she felt that she must stay on the ranch and take care of things. Her brother, Gabe, stayed with her for a while. The rangers working with her husband knew they could always count on a good meal at the Hicks' home, when they were in that vicinity.

The children were afraid of the Indians so it was easy for her to keep them in sight. The Indians, however, never bothered her except to steal horses when they knew Mr. Hicks was away. She tried to stake the horses at night so the Indians would not find them. She knew they were near when she heard the cattle running and bawling. She would put out the light, grab her ax and gather her children close about her. Mr. Hicks barely missed the Indians one time when he was returning from a long, hard trip. The Indians had stolen the horses and left the house the way he usually returned home. This time he happened to come home another way, much to the relief and happiness of the family.

Mrs. Hicks and the children were busy caring for the stock and doing the farm work. She raised a garden. Even the smallest children could help by picking the bugs off the beans and sweet potatoes. She dried beef, pickled it and stored it in a barrel. At first they had no orchard. Preserves were made of wild dew berries and mustang grapes and were put down in three or five-gallon stone jars. She made great quantities of wild plum jelly. Some cotton was raised for home use.

The happiest time of the day was after supper. As the family sat around the crackling fire the children picked the cotton seed from the lint while Mrs. Hicks carded or spun by candle light. Each girl was taught to knit just as soon as she was old enough. The socks and stockings for the entire family were knitted. Mr. Hicks brought cloth from San Antonio from which Mrs. Hicks made clothes for the family. She taught the girls to sew.

Mrs. Hicks worked quietly and talked very little, while Mr. Hicks was jolly and more affectionate with the children.

"I used to sit on my father's knee and comb his hair," said his daughter, Animate (Mrs. R. D. Garrison), "and think how lucky I was to get him for my Daddy instead of some other little girl's Daddy."

The children wanted to sit up late, especially if their parents were telling them stories of their childhood. But they had to go to bed early so as to get up early to go to work. The plowing was done with ox teams. Several cows were milked and the surplus butter was sold in Kerrville.

The Hicks home was noted for its hospitality. Everybody received a royal welcome. When the people living on the north prong of the Medina went to Bandera shopping they looked forward to spending the night at the Hicks. They talked far into the night, the children alertly listening. Then slept comfortably and happily on pallets. No one ever paid for his lodging or feed for the team.

Meantime Mr. Hicks' cattle had grown until the *HIX* brand was known all over that country. Wool had become one of the main cash crops. The sheep and goats were not much trouble. Wool and mohair were clipped about twice a year.

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The sheep and goats rustled their living as they roamed the hillsides.

Next to the land, Lucius Hicks probably liked horses best, so they, too, became a cash crop. After breaking the ones needed at home, some of the others were sold locally. Mr. Hicks and one of his sons, Cleophas, took one load of horses to Kentucky and sold them. This was a great trip for Cleophas.

Although the cattle were sold to local buyers, the marketing required much time. Wool and mohair, in the early days were sold in San Antonio, and later in Kerrville.

Mr. Hicks took up many of the alternate sections of land for the children. He gradually acquired more land until his holdings totaled more than 17,000 acres.

As he prospered he provided the conveniences available at that time for his family. In 1871 he built the big seven-room rock house still standing today. It was built across the creek near the old log cabin in order to be near the spring.

"I built a big house so as to have room for people when they came to spend the night with us," Mr. Hicks once said jokingly, "and now that we have plenty of room they don't come any more."

For the first time the family had plenty of room. The new walnut furniture was the pride of every member of the family. House work could be done more easily. The modern conveniences of a new cook stove, sewing machine and glass lamps were priceless additions in the new home, and other things Mrs. Hicks never dreamed of having when she left Poland. The girls were noted for their beautiful hand work. And now they had a place to show it off.

The thick rock walls provided more protection for Mrs. Hicks and the girls when they were alone. One night when Mr. Hicks was away the children noticed the window curtain blowing to and fro. They pushed a feather bed up against the window so as to make a shadow, hoping the Indians, which they were sure were on the outside, would think it was the shadow of their father. One of the girls ran to tell Mrs. Hicks to "Come quick, the Indians are here." She came with her old reliable, the ax, and laughed at their fears because the moving of the curtain was caused by the soft wind blowing through a broken window pane.

Mr. Hicks was among the group of men in that county who devoted much of his time to ridding the country of cattle thieves. One time he was reasonably sure that he knew who was stealing his cattle, but he could not catch him. He went to another man in the community and offered to pay him to work with the suspected cattle thief. "And when you get ready to steal my cattle," he said, "let me know and I'll be there with the officers, but I'll see that you are freed."

Because of his reputation for law and order, Mr. Hicks knew he could do it. He had the courage of his convictions, and never hesitated to do what he considered the right thing.

One day while going through Bandera Pass he found the skeleton of an Indian which had been dug up by some one. Beads and other things evidently buried with the Indian were scattered promiscuously about. Mr. Hicks dismounted and collected everything he could find that came out of the grave and placed them in the hole from which they were dug. Then, he reverently covered the remains and marked the grave by placing two stones above it. These remains proved to be those of an Indian chief who was killed in a battle with Captain Jack Hays' Rangers in the early "40's."

While every member of the Hicks family worked they were leaders in any community enterprise. They attended singing schools, and frequently had singing in the Hicks home on Sunday night. They enjoyed the play parties, but did not dance.

As each child married Mr. Hicks assigned him a piece of land.

"Go on and improve it," he would say.

The children knew that it would be their's when Mr. Hicks' will was read.

Mr. Hicks liked to ponder over his achievements since coming to Texas. He had land, a large number of cattle, many flocks of sheep and goats. He had helped

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build the community, and now his children were marrying into fine families and locating near him. They, too, were establishing homes and were substantial citizens in the community.

Just one thing marred his happiness. He was an ardent member of the Baptist Church, while Mrs. Hicks still adhered to the Catholic faith. She had always been interested in the children's spiritual welfare. Even when they were small she had walked with them the two and one-half miles to attend Sunday School and Church at Laxon Creek.

Mr. Hicks heard of an Evangelist that he thought could appeal to his wife. He gave him $50 to come and hold a protracted meeting. This camp meeting was held under brush arbor in the Thallman pasture, sheltered by great spreading live oaks. Mr. Hicks furnished corn to feed the teams and helped care for the people.

Mrs. Hicks attended every meeting, bringing her children with her. Mr. Hicks listened tensely as the preacher earnestly proclaimed the gospel of salvation. For eight days Mrs. Hicks never bowed her head. She swept up the aisle and sat on the front seat straight as an arrow, never taking her eyes off the preacher's face during the services. No one knew what she thought, and when finally she did make her confession and join the Baptist Church Mr. Hicks was the happiest man in the community. He immediately went to Bandera to tell her family. Some of them came to see her baptized. Fabian, one of the sons, two daughters, Animate and Eratha, and Mrs. Hicks were baptized in the Medina River at the same time.

Ever since Hadvega Anderwald's marriage to Lucius her attitude had seemed to say, "Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people," and after she joined the Baptist Church, "and thy God my God" was then added.

They attended church on Laxon Creek at first. When the Baptist Church in Medina was built Mr. Hicks supplied much of the money, and furnished the teams to haul the lumber. The Hicks men all donated their labor.

The family attended Sunday School and church there regularly. The girls rode horseback wearing hoop skirts. Mrs. Hicks always wore "a split case bonnet." In later years the bonnet was made of black taffeta.

After Mr. Hicks' death in 1899, Mrs. Hicks continued to live in the big rock house. Her daughter, Hercelia, and son, Elvius, were still at home. When Elvius married he built a home nearby. Mrs. Hicks and her daughter lived alone until the latter married Walter Meadows. Then the three continued to live there. Mrs. Meadows inherited the old home and still lives there.

Mrs. Hicks continued to care for the chickens and help with the chores. She would go to Medina occasionally, tend to her business and go back home. She pieced quilts during her leisure time.

In 1928 Mrs. Hicks passed away and was buried by the side of her husband. And in death one is still reminded of the Biblical quotation containing historic Ruth's final declaration, "Where thou

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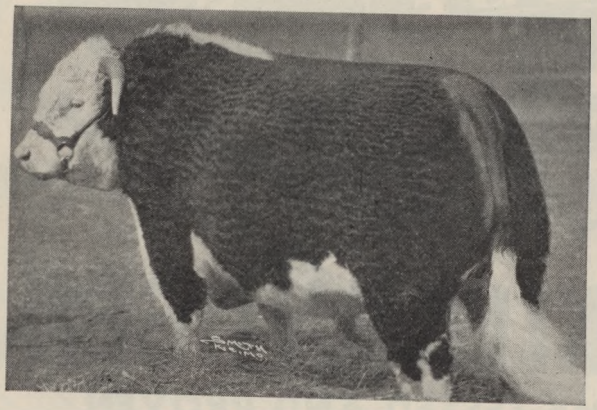
Larry Domino 22d
This good son of the noted Larry Domino is assisting his sire in our herd and we are getting some excellent calves by him.
When in need of quality seed stock we invite you to see these Larry Dominos, winners of the carlot championship at Fort Worth three times.
BRIDWELL HEREFORD RANCH
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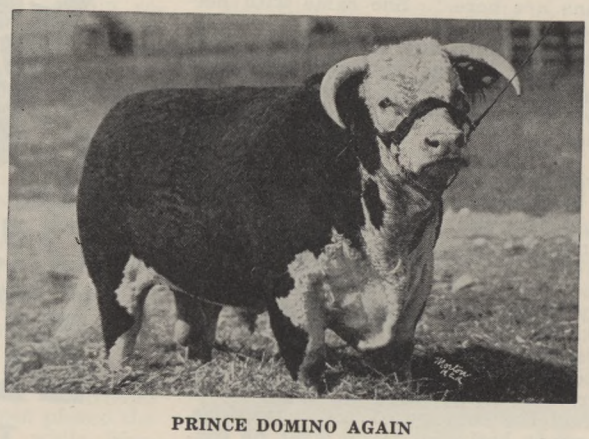
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One of the best sons of the noted Prince Domino Return at the head of our herd.
He is being mated to a selected group of females of Anxiety 4th breeding. It will be our pleasure to show them to you.
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W. H. HAMMON, Owner
Wichita Falls, Texas
CARL COBB, Manager
Iowa Park, Texas
DAVEY CARTER, Herdsman
Iowa Park, Texas

diest, I will die, and there will I be buried."

The Lucius Hicks holds a place among the sturdy pioneers of Bandera county. They were part of the cornerstone on which the present-day civilization of that beautiful hill county was built. And the lives of their descendants reflect the fine principles of law, order and religion for which Mr. and Mrs. Hicks stood. And just as they helped build the community life, their descendants are still in the front ranks of progress of the present day.

The children who lived to be grown and married are the following, all still living in Bandera county: Animate, married R. D. Garrison; Hercelia, married Walter Meadows; and Lucius, married Annie Kelly. Those dead are: Eratha, married George Fee; Cleophas, married Minnie Moody; Elvius, married Pearl Harris; Fabian, married Lucy Barrow; and Glemma, married Emma Garrison.

Harrisdale Sells 67 Herefords at $299

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ON JUNE 8, Dr. Chas. H. Harris, Fort Worth Hereford breeder, held another auction and sold 67 head for a total of $20,055, or an average of $299. The six bulls averaged $576 and the 61 females returned $272 per head. The peak figure of $1,625 was paid for Prince Domino C 150th, a son of Prince Domino Return and Lady Domino E 26th that went to Warren V. Woody, Chicago, who keeps his Herefords on a ranch near Barnard, Kans. Joe Stanway C 110th, another son of Prince Domino Return, went to Jas. Hering, McGregor, at $1,050.

Jno. B. Stribling & Son, Rotan, topped the female section when they went to $700 for Princess Domino 19th, a daughter of The Prince Domino, and Geo. Nance, Canyon, took Princess Domino 79th at $560. This good cow was by The Prince Domino and out of a daughter of Beau Blanchard 95th. Warren Woody paid $525 for Lady Randolph A 6th, and Black & Largent, Granbury, obtained Donlette Domini, the dam of the grand champion Donlette Jordan, at $500, while R. Q. Travers, Waco, paid the same price for Miss Domino 112th, a daughter of Snperior 95th.

Col. Earl Gartin was assisted in the handling of the sale by E. R. Johnson, secretary of the Texas Hereford Association; B. M. Anderson, assistant secretary of the American Hereford Association, and the newspaper representatives.

Among the buyers not mentioned were J. B. Brandon and Dr. Geo. Blackwell, Gorman; W. N. Vickery, Blackwell, Okla.; Ben Eastman, Fort Worth; W. M. Sanders, Mineral Wells; C. A. Kirkland, Mt. Calm; W. H. Campbell, Gainesville; F. M. Young, Overton; J. A. Blaydes, Duncan, Okla.; A. W. Burnside, Iowa Park; L. C. Hutson, Chickasha, Okla.; R. W. Tipton, Breckenridge; Pete McCluskey, Mineral Wells; Sam Spears, Hamilton; J. E. Lutz, Henrietta; W. B. Rhodes, Olton; R. W. Vickery, Wichita, Kans.; W. L. Vickery, Apache, Okla.; Ed. Hooker, Fulbright; Chas. Williamson, Dallas; C. K. Rickel, Fort Worth; C. A. McAden, Austin; C. L. Shamberger, Quitman; G. W. Payne, Saltillo; Ray Puckett, Wichita Falls; T. M. Armstrong, Gladewater; Geo. D. Keith, Wichita Falls; A. M. Pate, Sulphur Springs; Jas. Boswell, Tyler; Naud Burnett, Greenville; G. M. Cook, Cromwell, Okla.; Walter Boothe, Sweetwater; J. E. Parker, Odessa; and J. H. Bridges, Boyd.

Texans Heavy Buyers at Red Deer Sale

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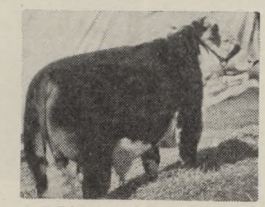
THE Red Deer Hereford dispersion at Wood Lake, Nebr., averaged $141 on 681 head. Top 50 head averaged $450 and top 100 head, $309. The 50 top bulls returned $395 per head and the 50 top females $228. The peak figure of $2,850 was paid by C K Ranch, Brookville, Kans., for Real Prince 29th, and Horseshoe Ranch, Hickory, Okla., paid $2,000 for R. D. Pioneer and $1,085 for Real Prince 39th. Real Prince D 13th went to L. L. Jones and Son, Garden City, Kans., at $1,750.

The top female was Princess 8th and she went to Jas. M. Brook, Brady, at $775. Mr. Brook was the heaviest purchaser, taking a total of 80 head among which were a number of the top females. Louis Cerf, Ennis, bought 29 head and Sawyer Cattle Co., San Angelo, took about 35 head. Other Texas buyers included R. D. Goodrich, Fort Worth, and Willis Hill and Son, Goldthwaite. Buyers were present from a wide area and cattle were distributed into 17 states by Col. A. W. Thompson, who did the selling.



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We also have for sale a Polled son of Beau Baldwin 19th, a herd sire prospect, and three Polled daughters of Pawnee Rollo 9th.

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RUPERT TONE 55th

SIRE

HAZFORD RUPERT 81st

Dam by

BOCALDO TONE 3d

The calves by this outstanding young bull, are really the Bilt-Rite kind.

Rupert Tone 55th

He is assisting the following herd bulls in our herd to produce those easy feeding, good fleshing calves, with the highest class beef qualities.

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RUPERT TONE A by HAZFORD TONE 74th
AMBROSE DOMINO 4th by AMBROSE DOMINO

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